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ABSTRACT

Developed for use with collaborative writing activities in conjunction with the Center for Educational Computing in English (CECE) Talk Program, this student guide provides sample activities for collaborative writing as well as detailed examples of the activities. The examples begin with a short exchange between people using the talk program to participate in the exercise and go on to show how a writer would make use of the results by using the printout of the session provided by the talk program to help plan, generate ideas, and revise. Sections of the guide include: (1) brainstorming; (2) discussing your paper with a partner; (3) what do readers expect?; (4) role-playing with writing; (5) sample questions for role-playing; and (6) using a reader's questions, summaries, requests for clarifications and predictions to inform your writing. (RS)

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A Student Guide to Collaborative Writing with CECE Talk:

A Computer Network Tool

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A Student Guide to Collaborative Writing with CECE Talk:

A Computer Network Tool

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Introduction

This manual has been developed for use with collaborative writing activities in conjunction with the CECE Talk Program. It assumes that you are familiar with the Talk program, after having read the CECE Talk Help Guide. It provides sample activities for collaborative writing, as well as detailed examples of the activities. The length of some of the examples may seem somewhat formidable at first glance, but don't let that scare you off. They are meant to show you how the exercise works, what it is trying to accomplish, and what you, the writer, can achieve by participating in such an exercise. Generally, the example will begin with a short exchange between people using the talk program to participate in the exercise. After you have seen how the actual exchange works while using the Talk program, the example goes on to show you how a writer would make use of the results of such a session, by using the printout of the session provided by the talk program to help plan, generate ideas and revise.

While many of the exercises deal specifically with a particular stage in the writing process, such as the brainstorming exercise to generate ideas, some of them can be carried out several times throughout the writing process. For example, many of the exercises are developed to help a writer gauge her intended audience by eliciting reader responses before the paper is completed. Eliciting reader response several times while writing your paper can have several advantages to you, such as assuring that you are still providing what your readers will want and expect, that you are answering their potential questions and clearing up any confusing areas for them. Obviously, the more reader responses you get, the more informed you will be as to the possible positions your readers may take. As a result, you will be able to anticipate and respond to those positions in your paper, covering many points of contention before they ever arise.

When your instructor assigns one of these exercises to you, you should be

sure to take time to read through the examples thoroughly. As you do this, pay attention to the goal of the exercise and how the writer uses the results of the exercise to inform her writing. If you are unclear about any of the exercises and their intent, discuss this with your instructor or other classmates, as it is very important that you understand why you are being asked to participate in these exercises and what you are expected to learn from them.

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Brainstorming

When people need to generate ideas, they often use a method known as brainstorming. For example, a group of business executives might conduct a brainstorming session to come up with possible solutions to a major business problem, or a writer might brainstorm for ideas on how to approach a particular writing topic. The basic idea is the same: to come up with as many ideas as possible without stopping to evaluate or judge them. As a writer using this technique, keeping your goal in mind will help you come up with more useful ideas, which you can evaluate after your brainstorming session. The notion behind this activity is that the more ideas you come up with, the better the possibility or producing good, quality ideas that can be directly applied to your topic or problem. Brainstorming in a group can be even more productive, as the number of ideas produced increases with the number of people involved.

This exercise will help you see how to generate ideas using brainstorming, and then how to evaluate those ideas to determine their usefulness. The idea is to get the group members to brainstorm on each individuals' topic, one at a time. The group members have received a list of the topics they will be discussing before the session actually takes place. This allows the members to think about the topic beforehand, giving their ideas time to incubate and grow. The example below illustrates a brainstorming session on the topic of "one common practice in American schools that either inhibits OR aids learning". In this example, the person whose topic is being discussed (**ks4w**) acts as the leader by providing a statement of the topic in a clear, specific form. It is important to introduce the topic in this way so that everyone in the group can keep the goal in mind while generating ideas. Asking questions related to the goal can also help, by bringing in some of the issues involved. In our example, the writer breaks down the topic by first asking for ideas about things which might inhibit learning and later asks for ideas concerning practices which might aid learning. Once the idea has been stated and read by the group, everyone begins to type their ideas into their talk windows.

After reading through the example on the next pages, follow the steps provided in the next section for conducting a brainstorming session with your group.

Example

ks4w: Hi everyone! OK, first I'm going to type in what the topic is and then, after you read it, we can start brainstorming on it. OK, here it is: Name one common practice in American schools that either inhibits or aids learning.

OK, so let's first start with things that inhibit learning--and say why they inhibit learning too.

rv7n: All-nighters

pd2q: use of calculators in elementary school level math classes

kl09: all-nighters don't inhibit me...is that bad?

ks4w: OK, good, but you aren't telling me why they are bad.

gr5d: One thing that inhibits liearning is when instrucators expecat student opinion to conform with their own. Students try to figure out what their teachers want and copy their teachers opinions instead of forming their own.

rv7n: at this school, teachers pile it on way too much to realistically be able to handle... at least in physics they do

kl09: what about being called on in class when you didn't do the reading

ks4w: making outlines of papers before anything else, which makes believe you haveeverything figured out before you start writing, which is rearely the case

kl09: having your papers held up to be gawked at because you didn't do it on a computer but instead relied on the good old typewriter.

ks4w: workbook exercises--inhibit learning

rv7n: I had a class called Fiction & Fact and it was just like taking a reading course!

kl09: having to write four or five papers in one week and no one willingly gives you an extension and you just know that they're going to grade you harder than they grade anyone else in the class

rv7n: We read, and then talked about it... only one paper all semester!

ks4w: OK--let's think about this in regards to what worked best for you in school, for instance, you liked giving presentations in front of the whole class or something

pd2q: One of my favorite classes was one where we were given much freedom in selecting the type of project we would do for the semester, ranging from oral presentation, to debate to designing instructional games.

rv7n: the best classes are those that require you to think not just turn in homework assignments

kl09: classroom participation

ks4w: homework

kl09: science projects

ks4w: special interests groups, like chemistry club

gr5d: foreign exchange programs

ks4w: group projects (ha ha--like brainstorming!)

rv7n: No, I like when they give free coffee during finals

ks4w: I always liked going on field trips, under the premise, of course, that they were somehow related to something we were studying. For example, a

bunch of jr. high school kids went to kennywood yesterday--it was a physics related field trip, so that they could learn the lasws of physics from the various rides

ks4w: OK guys, I think that's enough. Thanks alot. Bye!

As you can see, our writer received a lot of ideas from the other group members. After reviewing a printout of the log our writer begins to list the ideas, separating them into either a "inhibit learning" or "aids learning" category. Next, ideas that are relevant to both the topic and the writer's personal experienfces are marked with asterisks. Using the log as a guide, the writer is now prepared to decide and begin planning an approach to the topic. The list follows.

Inhibit learning

All-nighters

use of calculators in elementary school level math classes

*One thing that inhibits liearning is when instrucators expecat student opinion to conform with their own. Students try to figure out what their teachers want and copy their teachers opinions instead of forming their own.

at this school, teachers pile it on way too much to realistically be able to handle... at least in physics they do

making outlines of papers before anything else, which makes believe you haveeverything figured out before you start writing, which is rearely the case

*workbook exercises--inhibit learning

having to write four or five papers in one week and no one willingly gives you an extension and you just know that they're going to grade you harder than they grade anyone else in the class

Aid learning

**One of my favorite classes was one where we were given much freedom in selecting the type of project we would do for the semester, ranging from oral presentation, to debate to designing instructional games.

**the best classes are those that require you to think not just turn in homework assignments

classroom participation

**I always liked going on field trips, under the premise, of course, that they were somehow related to something we were studying. For example, a bunch of jr. high school kids went to kennywood yesterday--it was a physics related field trip, so that they could learn the lasws of physics from the various rides

homework

**science projects

**special interests groups, like chemistry club

foreign exchange programs

group projects (ha ha--like brainstorming!)

After reviewing the list, our writer notices that many group members felt classes that allowed students to think for themselves and capitalized on students' interests and motivation were the best learning experiences. Classes that did not allow for these types of learning experences were cited as bad classes. Having many personal experiences to support these views, our writer decides to write about classes and programs that give students a chance to explore, learn and grow, often times on their own, such as internships and foreign exhchange programs. The introductory paragraph reads:

> Why is it that there are some classes in school that all the students love, and other classes that are universally hated? When I think

> back on classes that I had in junior and senior high, the ones that stand out in my mind are ones that were somehow different from the other "traditional" classes. These were the classes that required no workbooks or standard homework sets, but rather allowed us to use our imaginations to learn. These were classes that allowed students to work in groups on projects of their choice, instead of sitting in assigned seats, individually filling in the answers to workbook questions. In short, these were the classes that took a new approach to learning, that allowed students to explore, grow and learn on their own, with only gentle guidance from the teacher. I would like to discuss why these classes appeal to students, and why students often feel as though they have learned more in classes that allowed them to explore the subject matter on their own.

This example has illustrated a writer using the talk program to conduct a brainstorming session, and then using the results to guide and inform her exploration of the topic. The talk program allows you to brainstorm freely, without concern for remembering or recording what is going on, making brainstorming an even more powerful activity. The next section provides the necessary steps for conducting a brainstorming session with the talk program.

Brainstorming with the talk program

You should have circulated the proposed topics to the group members at your last meeting, so that everyone has had a chance to think about them. Now follow the steps below to begin the brainstorming session.

Things to remember while brainstorming:

- Do not worry about spelling, complete sentences, etc. Instead, concentrate on producing as many ideas as possible.
- Do not stop to criticize the ideas of others, or to pass judgment on the ideas being presented.
- Keep in mind the goal, asking yourself related questions to help bring up relevant issues.

Step 1. (Group) Decide whose topic will be discussed first (this person will be the first leader). Each topic should be discussed for 10-15 minutes. (Time will depend on how many are in the group, everyone's topic should be discussed.)

Step 2. (Leader) The first leader should bring up the talk program to include the workstation names of all those in group.

Step 3. (Leader) As leader, you should type in a statement of your proposed topic. You should ask a question or focus on a particular aspect of the topic, to help guide the responses.

Step 4. (Group) Begin typing your ideas into your talk window. Keep an eye on what others are suggesting, as you can often get ideas from what others are saying.

Step 5. (Leader) When you have reached the specified time limit, ask everyone to make whatever they are typing be their last response.

Step 6. (Leader) Once everyone has finished typing, open the menus and choose Save.

Step 7. (Leader) After saving the log, open the menus and choose Print Log.

Step 8. (Group) Everyone should open the menu and choose Clear Log, to prepare for the next topic.

Step 9. (Group) Pick a new leader and begin again. Continue until all the topics have been discussed and everyone has a printout of their log.

Discussing your paper with a partner

A common adage says, in effect, that you cannot claim to know something until you can adequately explain it to someone else. Sometimes students use this approach when studying for an exam, by taking turns explaining various concepts that they are attempting to learn and understand. For a writer, this approach can be extremely profitable. By discussing your paper with someone else, you can discover new ideas and viewpoints, as well as discover passages which might confuse your readers. Your reader in this situation has the responsibility of asking questions when things are unclear, as well as letting you know when you've expressed your ideas in an easily understandable manner.

The following example illustrates a writer and reader discussing the writer's draft. While reading through the example, take note of the types of questions posed by the reader, as well as the way in which the writer responds to each point that the reader brings up. After the conversation, the writer uses a copy of the log to help revise the draft.

Example

ks4w: OK, I guess I should start by summarizing my draft. Feel free to interrupt me at any point, if you have questions or comments.

rv7n: OK, fine. What are you planning to write about?

ks4w: I am writing about the rights of non-smokers. I think that since smokers are harming non-smokers by polluting the air with cigarette smoke, something must be done to protect the non-smokers.

rv7n: What kind of evidence do you have that the non-smokers are actually harmed by "passive smoking"? That's what they call it, isn't it?

ks4w: Yes, exactly. As to the evidence, the Surgeon General has begun to

seriously look into these problems. In recent reports from that office, they have included a designated section on the hazards of passive smoking.

rv7n: Do they have any conclusive evidence of harm?

ks4w: Yes, they have found that "sidestream smoke" can irritate the eyes and nasal passages of non-smokers. The nasal passages become inflamed in some cases. They have also found that in some people (non-smokers), the smoke can obstruct the passageways in the lungs, which increases the breathing rate.

rv7n: Do they say anything about long-term effects?

ks4w: No, not that I remember. I think this is a fairly new area of investigation, so they probably don't have enough information over any long period of time to be able to talk about the long term effects. They have been studying the harmful effects of smoking to the smokers themselves and already know that smoking is very dangerous to your health. Maybe I can say something about knowing how much harm smokers do to themselves, should be enough reason to believe that some of the harmful effects are being passed along to non-smokers.

rv7n: Yes, that might be useful. What will that do for your paper though? Where would you go with it?

ks4w: Well, it might be useful in terms of discussing the notion that individuals are free to do as they please, as long as they don't harm or interfere with the rights of other people. From there I can argue that since all evidence (and intuition I guess!) seems to say that sidestream smoke does harm the non-smokers, there is cause for prohibiting such behavior on the part of smokers.

rv7n: OK, that's good. I'm already getting ready to fight for non-smokers' rights! Does the Surgeon General's office make any suggestions about how to protect the non-smoker?

ks4w: Well, not specifically. The good thing is that more people are now aware of the problem, as a result of the Surgeon's reports. This public awareness has led to things like designated smoking sections in public places.

rv7n: Yeah, but that seems to be a rather limited solution to the problem, don't you think?

ks4w: Yes, I do agree, because the fact that all the smokers are sitting on one side of a large room in no way guarantees (nor can it) that the smoke doesn't drift over to the non-smoking section. So once again, the non-smokers are suffering. These types of solutions are superficial, at best. What really needs to be done, I think, is to outlaw smoking in all public places--this way the public air is not polluted by cigarette smoke. If someone wants to smoke, they should do it in their private spaces, not where others will be affected.

rv7n: Agreed. Do you have any suggestions on how to go about getting laws like that passed?

ks4w: Well, I think it will take a lot of motivation on the part of non-smokers to get the ball rolling. But I also think that there is precedent for this sort of thing, considering all the anti-pollution laws that have been passed regarding industry. I plan on tying my issue in with that, to say that clean air is not necessarily an unlimited resource, and that it needs to be protected at all levels. Actually, this is one part that I'm sort of having trouble with, because I don't know how to really make the connection--it's sort of like having to connect the notion of "universal air" vs. private air--or something. Any suggestions?

rv7n: I see your problem. You could make the connection by saying something like, just as one large industrial complex is not permitted to release pollutants into the air surrounding it, people should not be allowed either. It's really quite similar, i.e., an individual industry and an individual--both are polluting the public air and both should be stopped.

ks4w: Yeah, that's good. thanks. Well, that really about covers all that I've thought/written about so far. Do you have any more questions?

rv7n: No, I think that about does it. Are you going to let me see the final product?

ks4w: Of course--in fact I may want to do this one more time, after I've written some more.

rv7n: OK fine--let me know.

Using the log to help guide your revisions

The writer now uses a printout of the log to compare what has already been written to what has just been discussed. Using the discussion in the log as a guide, the writer begins to revise the draft. Below you can see what the original draft contained, and then see how it has changed as a result of the discussion. You may notice that much of what was said during the conversation has been integrated into the paper.

(Original) A smoker enters a public restaurant and lights a cigarette. Within minutes, a nearby non-smoker becomes irritated by the steady stream of smoke being released into the air. The non-smoker, who had already received his meal looks for another place to sit, but fails to find another table. He politely asks the smoker to stop smoking, explaining the discomfort that the cigarette is causing him, but the smoker tells the person to move elsewhere if he does not like it. The non-smoker is forced to suffer irritation in the eyes and nose as he eats his meal.

A review of the log reveals that the writer's explanation begins by discussing the rights of non-smokers, while the introduction from the draft says nothing about these rights. Our writer wants to "set the stage" for the reader, but wants to bring in other important points too, such as the rights of non-smokers and the role of public awareness in possible solutions. This is accomplished by revising the paragraph as follows:

> A smoker enters a public restaurant and lights a cigarette. Within minutes, a nearby non-smoker becomes irritated by the steady stream of smoke being released into the atmosphere. The non-smoker, who had already received his meal looks for another place to sit, but fails to find another table. He politely asks the smoker to stop smoking, explaining the discomfort that the cigarette is causing him, but the smoker tells the person to move elsewhere if he does not like it. The non-smoker is forced to suffer irritation in the eyes and nose as he eats his meal. The problem in this all-too-common scene is that one person's "space" is being invaded by another person, in the form of cigarette smoke, and for a long time, there did not seem to be any solution in sight. That may not be the case for long however. As the war between smokers and non-smokers continues to escalate, more and more people are recognizing it as a serious problem. And often, once a problem has been recognized, solutions are not far behind.

(Original) Many know of the Surgeon General's reports on the affects of smoking. These reports not only warn us of the hazards to smokers themselves, but each report also contains a designated section on passive smoking - the involuntary inhalation by non-smokers of the same smoke emanating from a nearby smoker's cigarette. Although the main purpose of this problem analysis is not just to expose the hazards of passive smoking to the non-smoker, this is certainly an important aspect of the overall problem.

In the original draft, the writer has stated that the intent of the paper is not to expose the hazards of passive smoking, but in fact this (as well as the need to do something about the program) is the main point. Noting from the log that the first thing the reader wanted to know about was evidence supporting the claim that passive smoke is harmful, the writer decides to bring in important evidence from the Surgeon General's office early on in the paper. In response to the reader's questions about evidence of long-term effects of possive smoking, our writer discusses the potential health hazards of passive smoking in light of what is known about the long-term effects of smoking on the health of smokers. From there our writer goes on to discuss the notion of people exercising their rights only as long as it does not harm or interfere with another person's rights. The revised second paragraph is shown below:

> Many know of the Surgeon General's reports on the affects of smoking. These reports not only warn us of the hazards to smokers themselves, but each report also contains a designated section on passive smoking - the involuntary inhalation by non-smokers of the same smoke emanating from a nearby smoker's cigarette. Reports show that many non-smokers suffer eye irritation, inflamed nasal passages and obstructed air passageways in the lungs. Since these are many of the same hazards known to effect smokers, it seems reasonable to conclude that passive smoking can be just as harmful to a non-smoker. Such a conclusion would adequately answer those who claim that any type of government action that would restrict smokers in any way would be an infringement on their rights. People who take this approach seem to forget the notion that a person is free to do as they wish, only as long as their action does not harm or interfere with another person's rights. In the case of smokers, their actions are indeed harming others, which suggests that they should not be allowed to continue their actions in an unrestricted manner.

(Original) But even if these hazards, as you see them, may or may not exist, no argument can be made denying the general irritation caused to the non-smoker. Irritation to the eyes becomes obvious as the blinking rate of the non-smoker's eyes increases. Nasal passages may become inflamed, and as I mentioned earlier, there is definitive evidence that the passageways within the lungs themselves are slightly obstructed.\bold{ } Also, although this obstruction may not be apparent to the non-smoker, it does cause an increase in the breathing rate.

Looking over the third paragraph, our writer realizes that the supporting evidence of harm has already been discussed, so it is no longer needed here. Noting from the log that the next topic discussed was that of possible solutions, our writer decides to begin talking about solutions in this paragraph. Since the reader had agreed that separate smoking areas did not really do much as far as solving the problem, our writer begins the next paragraph with a discussion of that fact:

> The non-smoker has won a small battle in this continuing war, public establishments are now designating separate smoking and non-smoking areas for the smokers and non-smokers. The problem with this, however, is that having all the smokers sitting

> on one side of a large room in no way guarantees (nor can it) that the smoke does not pervade the surrounding atmosphere of the non-smoker. I feel the only true solution in this situation is to create totally separate sections where the smoke in the smoking area is unable to enter the non-smoking environment in any way.

(Original) The non-smoker has one a small battle in this continuing war; public establishments are now designating separate smoking and non-smoking areas for the smokers and non-smokers. This is a beginning, but this is not the solution. I not only say this out of personal experience, but out of experiences others have had. The story is the same; a non-smoker is seated in a non-smoking area that is close to a smoking section. The smoke is still able to pervade the surrounding atmosphere of the non-smoker, and the non-smoker is made to suffer once again. I feel the only true solution is to create totally separate sections where the smoke in the smoking area is unable to enter the non-smoking environment in any way.

As you can see, the writer has basically replaced the third paragraph with the fourth. Referring to the log once again, our writer is reminded that a clear statement of the proposed solution has still not been provided and so writes the following paragraph. In addition to stating the proposed solution, our writer makes the connection between public awareness and the success of this solution.

> But even if it were possible to contain the smoke in a separate area, this would still not be enough. There really needs to be a large public effort to curb this indiscriminate pollution of the air we all breathe. Air pollution from cigarette smoke, while perhaps not on such a large scale, is really no different than industrial pollution. As such, I see no reason why the restrictions placed on industry to curb air pollution cannot be applied to the smokers vs. non-smokers problem. Whether it is an individual industry or just an individual polluting the air--the problem is the same, and I see no good reason why the response to the problem should be any different.

The Right Questions

The previous example has shown how you can use the talk program to discuss your paper and then use the log produced by the talk program to help guide your revisions. Before actually completing the exercise with your partner read the next section. This provides a detailed explanation of the questioning technique used in our example. It shows you how to proceed through the discussion by asking questions that will help the writer confirm that all vital points have been addressed (for example, an introduction, statement of the problem with supporting evidence, proposed solution with supporting evidence, etc.) The particular point or issue the question seeks to elicit is shown in parenthesis after the question. Other possible or more general questions are provided as well. You may wish to use or modify these for your particular discussion.

Things to remember when questioning:

- avoid questions with yes or no answers
- if you feel your question was not adequately answered, try asking again by rephrasing the original question, or asking it from another point of view.
- go from general to more specific questions to help assure that all your questions are answered to your satisfaction. Repeat this general to specific approach each time a new subject is introduced.
- let the writer know when she has done a good job of covering a particular point

Your first question should be an open-ended, general question, such as:

So what is it you are writing about? (overview)

What's your topic?

So tell me about your paper.

After you have received some information on the topic, you should begin to get more specific, pressing your partner for more details to help you better

understand her point. From the previous example, our reader accomplished this by asking:

What kind of evidence do you have that the non-smokers are actually harmed by "passive smoking? (this is a problem because....)

I take it you have a problem with that?

And how do you feel about that?

Can you prove that?

By asking several specific questions on a particular subject, the writer is forced to think of all the related issues, as well as see points she may not have considered. From our earlier example, this occurred when the reader asks:

Do they say anything about long-term effects? (elaborations)

Anything else?

What about ....?

This question elicited a lot of thought from our writer, who had to admit to being unaware of any evidence of this type. A fairly integral part of the paper results from this discussion, however, when our writer concludes that evidence derived from studying smokers could be transferred to the possible effects of passive smoking. After acknowledging that this was an important and useful point, our reader asks a question that motivates the writer to think of possible connections between issues. Our reader asked:

Yes, that might be useful. What will that do for your paper though? Where would you go with it? (logical connections, leading to conclusion)

How will that help your argument?

How does that relate to what you said earlier?

After allowing the writer to develop a connection between the evidence of

harm and individual rights, our reader indicates that the subject has been adequately covered ("Ok, that's good."). The next question successfully moves the discussion onto another subject.

Does the Surgeon Generals' office make any suggestions about how to protect the non-smoker? (what others think or have said about this, possible solutions)

Has anything been done/tried about this?

Has anyone else thought about this?

The answer provided by the writer does not fully address the question, so our reader tries to get more information by asking:

Yeah, but that seems to be a rather limited solution to the problem, don't you think? (why other solutions don't/won't work)

And what's wrong with that?

Wasn't that a popular idea?

This question has moved the writer towards a discussion of possible solutions to the problem. The reader once again confirms a valid point for the writer ("Agreed") and then presses for more elaborations on the proposed solution.

Do you have any suggestions on how to go about getting laws like that passed? (elaborate, offer practical solution)

So, what would you do?

How would you go about accomplishing that?

After discussing various ideas, the writer acknowledges uncertainty as to how this will actually be accomplished. This is an instance where the reader is a great source of new ideas and viewpoints. After the reader offers a possible way of dealing with the problem, the writer decides that enough "food for

thought" has been generated and ends the session by thanking the reader and requesting that they do this again after revisions have been made.

Using the talk program to complete this exercise with a partner

You should now be ready to complete this exercise with a partner. You should bring your draft with you, so that you are able to discuss all that you plan to write about during this exercise. You should not, however, stick strictly to what you have written already. The point is to explain to your reader what you are trying to say (which you may not have accomplished in your draft). As you saw in our example, reviewing your explanations after the exercise might help you better focus on what it is you really wish to say.

Writer: Start the talk program with your partner.

Reader: Begin the discussion by asking what your partner is writing about.

Writer: Explain, in as much detail as you feel is required, what your topic is and what your feelings on it are.

Reader: After reading your partner's explanation of her topic, pick out something that was mentioned that you'd like to know more about. Try to make your question as clear as possible, so that your partner will know exactly what you want to have explained.

Writer: Respond to your partner's questions as you would when discussing any issue of common interest. Remember that you want your reader(s) to have a good understanding of what you are trying to say, so you should continue explaining until the reader has such an understanding.

Continue this back and forth questioning until the entire paper has been discussed. When the discussion has ended, the writer should print out the log from this session. Review the log to see where your paper needs more elaboration or detail.

What Do Readers Expect?

Readers do not read passively. As they read they are actively making meaning, disagreeing and forming expectations about what will come next. For example, read the following sentences and form a prediction about what you think will come next:

John walked to the restaurant. He went in. The maitre 'd seated him.

What do you think will come next? If you answered something like "A waiter brought a menu"--you would be like most readers. If the writer continued with "A bomb exploded.," your expectation as a reader would have not been confirmed.

That is not to say that, as a writer, you must always confirm your readers' expectations. But you do want to be aware that readers have expectations. As a writer, you can use this knowledge to write texts that you predict will confirm or violate those expectations.

This exercise will help you gain awareness of readers' expectations. The goal is to get other people to tell you whether what you have written fulfills their expectations. We have provided an example to help illustrate how this exercise can help you in your writing. The example shows how one writer (gr3k) collects reader responses from two people, (mb4r and pd5t). After using the talk program to discuss the paragraph, the writer uses a printout of the log file as a guide during revision.

After reading through the example, you should do the exercise yourself. The next section provides the necessary steps for completing the exercise with your partner.

Example

First reader: gr3k: Picture the following scene: a new CMU freshman arrives on campus.

mb4r: You are going to talk about the first days of freshman year at CMU.

gr3k: Totally disoriented and bewildered, the new freshman has no idea about campus life or about the surrounding area.

mb4r: You will talk about the problems that the freshman has during those first days.

gr3k: The Freshman Orientation program is designed to introduce this new freshman to his/her new environment.

mb4r: You will talk about how the Freshman Orientation will help the freshman learn about campus life.

gr3k: I would like to examine whether or not that program fulfills its goal: to introduce new freshmen to the different aspects of the CMU campus.

mb4r: " " " " freshman orientation and how it affected the freshman.

gr3k: OK that's it for my first paragraph.

mb4r: You are probably going to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of Freshman Orientation and whether or not it is necessary in order for the freshman to be accostomed to his/her environment.

Second reader:

gr3k: Picture the following scene: a new CMU freshman arrives on campus.

pd5t: You are going to talk about what it feels like to be a new freshman on campus.

gr3k: Totally disoriented and bewildered, the new freshman has no idea about campus life or about the surrounding area.

pd5t: You will talk about how a student might find out more information about campus life.

gr3k: The Freshman Orientation program is designed to introduce this new freshman to his/her new environment.

pd5t: You are going to talk about how the Orientation program can help an incoming freshman.

gr3k: I would like to examine whether or not that program fulfills its goal: to introduce new freshmen to the different aspects of the CMU campus.

pd5t; You will talk about whether or not the Orientation program does the job it is supposed to do--orient the student to his new surroundings.

gr3k: OK that's it for my first paragraph.

pd5t: You will discuss what parts of the program really help the student, and which parts don't.

After printing out the transcript from this exercise, the writer compares the two responses to the original paragraph, noting where the expectation of the readers are not met.

Original Paragraph:

Picture the following scene: a new CMU freshman arrives on campus. Totally disoriented and bewildered, the new freshman has no idea about campus life or about the surrounding area. The Freshman Orientation program is designed to introduce this new freshman to his/her new environment. I would like to examine whether or not that program fulfills its goal: to introduce new freshmen to the different aspects of the CMU campus.

The writer notes that both readers expected the paper to talk about what it feels like to be an incoming freshman. While really wanting to talk about the Orientation program, our writer wanted to draw a picture of the person first, to

demonstrate why an Orientation program might be useful. However, since the first two sentences in the paragraph talk about the student and how that student feels, the writer changes these sentences to subordinate the description of the student to the overall goal of the paragraph. The first sentence of the paragraph now reads:

An incoming CMU freshman arrives on campus, totally disoriented and somewhat bewildered at his new surroundings.

Having condensed the first two sentences, the writer moves on to the third sentence, noticing that the two readers had practically the same expectation, and that it was the desired expectation. Not wanting the readers to think that the Orientation program will solve all of the student's problems, since our writer plans to be looking into whether or not it actually does, the third sentenced is changed to read:

Looking through the myriad of information that has been stuffed into his freshman packet, he comes across a notice about a Freshman Orientation program and sighs with relief, believing that his problems are solved.

After thinking about the comments from mb4r about whether or not the program is necessary for the freshman, and the comments from pd5t about the program actually helping the students, our writer decides to change the last sentence. What the writer really wants to focus on is whether the program helps the students--in effect, whether the goals of the program are correct, rather than just met. The sentence now reads:

In this paper I would like to examine whether or not the Orientation program does in fact solve the problems encountered by incoming freshman at CMU.

The revised paragraph now reads:

An incoming CMU freshman arrives on campus, totally disoriented and somewhat bewildered at his new surroundings. Looking through the myriad of information that has been stuffed into his freshman packet, he comes across a

notice about a Freshman Orientation program and sighs with relief, believing that his problems are solved. In this paper I would like to examine whether or not the Orientation program does in fact solve the problems encountered by incoming freshman at CMU.

This example has illustrated how a writer could use reader feedback reader to guide revision. While this writer was specifically interested in confirming reader expectations, this does not necessarily need to be the case. Many times, a writer may purposely write so as to not confirm reader expectation--surprising the reader can be a powerful tool in a writers' repertoire. Such a writer might use the log to make sure that the readers are indeed being surprised. We have shown how eliciting reader response before completion of a piece of text can add much to the final product, and using the talk program is a good way to do just this.

Steps for Completing the Exercise

Follow the steps below to complete the exercise. If you are in pairs, you can go through the exercise with one partner first, and then trade partners with another pair and repeat the exercise. In this exercise, the writer of the piece of text will be referred to as "Writer", and the reader will be referred to as "Reader".

Writer: Use ez to view the piece of text you wish to work with. Bring up the talk program with your partner. Once the talk windows have appeared, copy the first sentence of your text from the ez window and paste it in your talk window.

Reader: After reading the sentence, type in your window what you expect to come next.

Writer: After reading your reader's response, copy the next sentence of your text from the ez window and paste it in your talk window.

Reader: After reading the sentence, type in your window what you expect to come next.

Repeat these steps until you have gone through the entire paragraph. Once you have gone through the whole text, switch roles with your partner and read/respond to his or her paragraph.

After you have been through both papers, trade partners with another pair and repeat the exercise. When you have finished the exercise with your second partner, you should print a copy of the transcript. As you revise your paper, you will want to look over the transcripts from this exercise to see if you have met your readers' expectations in the areas that you wanted to do so.

Summary of Reader Expectation Exercise

Here is a quick refresher of the steps entailed in the previous exercise.

Step 1. Bring up the talk program with your partner's workstation.

Step 2. (Writer) View the text of your paragraph in an ez window.

Step 3. (Writer) Copy the first sentence of your paragraph into the talk window.

Step 4. (Reader) Typing into your window, tell the writer what you expect to follow.

Step 5. Repeat Steps 3 & 4 until you have discussed the entire paragraph.

Step 6. Switch roles and repeat Steps 1-5.

Step 7. Switch partners with another pair and repeat entire exercise.

Step 8. Print out the log file.

Step 9. Refer to the log file while revising your paragraph, checking to see that you are anticipating your readers' responses correctly.

Role-playing with Writing

Writers often write to communicate their ideas to an audience. This audience might consist of members of a writer's particular community or discipline; it might be a general audience, made up of people from a variety of backgrounds; or it might be a specific individual, such as a professor. As a writer, you need to have some ideas on what your readers will want, expect or need from you, because these needs often vary from one group or individual to another. One way to increase your understanding of your audience is to engage in an activity known as role-playing. Role-playing in the writing process involves discussing your writing in a variety of contexts, each addressing a possible reading audience. These discussions can take place in your own mind, with a voice that takes on the roles of your potential readers, or can occur with a "live" reader or readers. While role-playing by yourself has the advantage of not needing to get together with another person, it does have some disadvantages. You may find you are so familiar with what you have written, that you are unable to portray, by yourself to yourself, the attitude of a real reader. For instance, if you have written a paper that discusses everything you know about chemotherapy, you might find it difficult to come up with real questions that might result from reading your paper, since you may feel as though you already know all the answers. The fact is, however, that you only know the answers as you have written them, whereas another person may still have questions after reading what you have written. For this reason, role-playing with a live reader is often much more productive.

The following exercise has been designed to make you more aware of the various points of view your readers may have. You may think that you write solely for and to your instructor, but of course this need not be the case. For instance, you may wish to submit something you have written for a class to your college newspaper. In this case, you would have your instructor as one reader, but you would also have the rest of your student body as another audience. Having an idea of what these two different audiences will require

from you will help you get your ideas across to everyone who reads what you have written.

Below is an example which shows two people engaged in role playing using CECEtalk. In this example, one person is taking the role of a peer, someone from the writers' own community (in particular, another student who may be affected or involved in the same things that the writer is writing about). In discussing the paper like this, the writer becomes aware of some issues that should be taken into consideration, such as the need to do research and learn who the intended audience is. The same exercise could take place again once a draft is written, to see if these issues have been adequately addressed. There are a number of different roles that could be used for this exercise; some others you might want to try are the roles of an instructor, a child, a colleague who will need to act on the information you provide, someone from outside of your particular community whom you wish to convince to see your point of view, or what is called a devil's advocate--someone who challenges your every assertion. Refer to the next section, Sample Question, which gives ideas and questions for some other roles you may wish to play.

Peer Role-playing Example

ks4w: My proposal is the possibility of getting a computerized bulletin board so as to get rid of the messy bulletin boards and litter on campus. This will give the campus a better look and may be a recruiting tool to get seniors in high school.

pd2q: This sounds like it might be a good proposal. What research do you plan to do on the subject?

ks4w: First, I will say how the bulletin boards are too messy because of the excess of messages on them, then I will say how this excess of paper gives the campus a bad appearance, then I will say how a computerized billboard will cut down on the excess of messages and litter.

pd2q: Who will your audience be?

ks4w: My audience will be the Carnegie Mellon Administration or possibly Student Senate.

pd2q: Do you know how much money it will cost, if any, to have a computerized bulletin board rather than the ones we have now?

ks4w: I have not found out the costs of this project out yet. I plan on getting this information when writing the rough draft.

pd2q: This sounds like a good plan, it would be a good idea to cut down on the litter from the bulletin boards we have now. You alo might want to talk about the problem of bulletin boards we have now. There is a lot of competition among the frats to get party signs up. Rival frats tear each other's signs down.

ks4w: Good idea Pete, this will give each frat the opportunity to promote their parties without competition from other frats. It will also save them the time and money spent on making the copies and putting them up.

pd2q: Sounds good. Do you want to talk about my proposal now?

ks4w: Yes, that sounds good.

Using the log produced by talk

After the roleplaying session ends, the writer gets a print out of the log. From this our writer is able to draw up a checklist of what will need to be covered in the paper. The checklist is given below:

Problem: Messy bulletin boards and litter;

Additional probs: problem of rival fraternaties tearing down each others' notices (see disadvantages for more)}

Proposed Solution: computerized bulletin boards

After putting the proposal into a problem/solution statement, our writer goes on to list the disadvantages of the bulletin boards on campus now, and then lists the perceived advantages of the proposed solution.

Disadvantages of current bulletin boards:

- messy, notices fall off and litter campus
- bad appearance of campus may give bad impression to prospective students
- outdated messages remaining forever on them
- waste of paper required to cover all the physical boards on campus
- rival frat problem--leads to wasting paper too--not to mention bad feelings (use ex. of frats tearing down notices put up by GALA earlier in semester)

Perceived advantages of computerized bboards:

- no paper involved
- only need to post to one place (even though you may post to different bboards)
- possibly wider disemination of information
- titles of the messages would contain dates, so that readers will be able to tell when a message is outdated.
- would "clean up" the campus, thereby giving us a better appearance to prospective students
- would allow frats and other groups to post without competition--fair distribution of all notices
- Do a cost analysis of computerized bboards vs. current boards (this, added to advantages should provide adequate support for my suggestion!)

While our writer may go over this list again to add further examples and ideas, this is already a good plan to use as a guide in writing a first draft.

Roleplaying with the Talk program

After reading through the previous example, you should be ready to complete the roleplaying exercise with a partner. While our exercise illustrated a writer using the exercise to help with writing a rough draft, you may wish to do the exercise several more times while writing your paper. As reader, you should ask questions which will result in answers to the following types of questions:

What do you mean?

How so?/Explain/Elaborate

How do you know?/What evidence do you have?

Such as?/Examples?

Why? OR Why not?

So What?

Writer: Start the talk program with your partner. Give a brief description of your proposal.

Reader: Begin questioning your partner, looking for answers to the questions listed above. If you are not satisfied with an answer you receive, try rephrasing the question or asking from a different view point. Make your questions as clear as possible, so that your partner will know exactly what you want to have explained.

Continue this back and forth questioning until the entire paper has been discussed. When the discussion has ended, the writer should print out the log from this session.

Sample Questions For RolePlaying

It is useful to have a set of questions to help guide you in whatever role you have chosen to play for the roleplaying exercises. Below you will find groups of questions for possible roles you may decide to play. In each case, you will see how questions, directed from the various viewpoints, can help guide the writer in addressing the appropriate audience. Feel free to modify these questions, as well as come up with your own to fit your particular situation. As a writer, the questions and answers resulting from these exercises can help you check to see that you are getting your ideas across to your intended audience in the way you had planned.

Questions for the role of instructor

When you are writing a paper for a class, your instructor will always be one audience you need to keep in mind. The most obvious way to do this is to follow the instructions for the assignment, making sure that you address all of the points that are required by it. In terms of this exercise, a good way to check to see that you have actually completed the assignment as expected by your instructor is to use the assignment to guide the questions in your roleplaying session. For example, based on the assignment given below, a reader might ask you the following questions:

> The assignment reads:
>
> Many students, enrolled in classes that require extensive use of the computer facilities on campus, have been complaining recently that there are not enough computing facilities available to make this requirement feasible. The Office of Academic Computing has stated that one of its biggest problems is finding out what students want and need from their computing environment. In an effort to address the problems, the Office of Academic Computing has asked the student population to provide some input to help guide their actions. Write an *analysis of the problem* from your point of view, discussing the *assumptions* involved in the problem and giving *alternatives* and *implications*.

Possible questions relating to the assignment:

What do you see as the problem here? **(Looking for problem statement/thesis)**

Do you think the problem is not enough computers or bad communication between the students and Academic Computing? **(Looking for analysis of problem)**

-Why do you think that? **(Looking for assumptions, more analysis)**

-Explain your reasons for coming to that conclusion. **(Looking for more analysis, supporting evidence)**

-What kind of evidence do you have that that is the case?**(Looking for supporting evidence)**

Is this a new problem?

Has it ever arisen anywhere else/Have other people experienced similar problems? **(Looking for background information and how others view the problem/similar situations)**

-How did they deal with it/How was it dealt with then? **(Looking for possible solutions)**

What are some possible solutions to this problem?

-Have any of those been tried before?

-Why do you think "that" (replace "that" with what partner has suggested) would work? **(Looking for supportive arguments)**

-What would be the advantages to that solution? Disadvantages? **(Looking for implicaltons)**

What is your conclusion?

Explain your final recommendation.

The Role of Devil's Advocate

As everyone knows, a person playing devil's advocate can quickly become a nuisance by constantly disagreeing with what you say. While you wouldn't want to put up with this type of person for any extended period of time, responding to such an antagonist while discussing a paper you have written can often produce new and different insights for you. In addition to opening your eyes to new ideas and viewpoints, carrying on a discussion with a devil's advocate forces you to do your best at explaining and defending your position.

In reviewing the log produced by the talk program after such a discussion, you may find that you have stated your position much better while discussing it than you had in what you had actually written.

Playing the role of devil's advocate can be a lot of fun, and is really quite easy. In general, you want to challenge the assertions made by the writer. The writer will then have to elaborate the point, by presenting arguments and evidence to support the stated view. When the writer begins to present solutions to the problem, you would want to propose alternate solutions (possibly far-fetched ones) so that the writer will have to argue why the proposed solution is better than the ones you offer. You may also propose a solution that the writer had not considered before, and which may be quite helpful to the goals of the paper. One important point to remember: When the writer has done a good job of stating a point, concede the argument and move on to another topic. Arguing a point to a stalemate will not be helpful to the writer. Below are some sample exchanges between a writer and a devil's advocate.

Writer: In my paper, I say that the administration needs to do something about the quality of student's lives on campus.

Devil: I don't think it's the job of the administration to make improvements in the quality of life for the students on campus. What makes you think that the administration can do anything about it? **[State an opposing viewpoint:** i.e., it's up to the students, not the administration.]

Writer: Well, I think that part of the reason the quality is so bad in the first place is because the administration places so much emphasis on academics, and not enough on the other aspects of a student's life. I think the administration can help balance these things out, by emphasizing the other aspects as well.

Devil: The students come here for academic training--that's what the school is here for. If they want to develop other interests, I would say it is up to the

individual students to do this for themselves. **[Propose alternate solutions:** i.e., The solution is not to have the administration de-emphasize its role, but instead, the students should take charge of their lives and develop other areas on their own.]

Writer: Well that might be true. But if the students are forced to spend so much time and energy on their studies, they don't have any spare time in which to pursue their other interests.

Devil: OK, I'll give you that small point! **[Concede to writer]** Tell me what you think would improve the quality of life on campus. **[Move on]**

Writer: Well, first I say that one problem students have is lack of spare time. As a way of addressing this smaller problem, I suggest that the Administration provide more activities on campus, so that it will be easy and quick for students to get to an event. This will also address a problem often cited by students--they can't "get" anywhere to do anything because they don't have transportation.

Devil: Oh come on. I don't think that is a valid complaint for students to make. After all, there are buses or they could catch a ride with someone who does have a car. **[Challenge assertions]**

Writer: That may work for some of them, some of the time, but what about the others? I contend that if you consider the lack of time problem for some students along with the transportation problem for some students, you will see that the end product is still a problem. And this problem can be eased, if not solved, by the administration offering more events of interest to the students on campus.

Devil: OK, you win. I'll admit that more events on campus would contribute to an overall improvement in the quality of life on campus. **[Concede to writer]** But that seems like a rather small effort on the part of the administration. What else do you propose they do? **[Move on]**

There are, of course, many other roles you may wish to try. For example, you might take the role of a Doubting Thomas--someone who has trouble believing anything the writer has to say. Such a person would constantly demand more proof, more evidence, more examples and more explanations of the main points, before ever being persuaded by what the writer has to say. Or you could take on the role of a child, or some average Joe off the street. When playing this role, you would act as though you just simply could not understand what the writer is saying, repeatedly asking for clarifications and further explanations. Think of a child who constantly asks "Why?", "How?", etc.

Using a Reader's Questions, Summaries, Requests for Clarifications and Predictions to Inform your Writing

A good piece of writing is often thought of as being readable--flowing logically from one idea to another, each paragraph containing a coherent assertion or argument, all leading up to a nice, neat, logical conclusion. As a writer you probably know how difficult it actually is to get a piece of writing to turn out like this! Sometimes, no matter how hard you try, you can't quite seem to express your thoughts in words that others can fully understand. This can occur for a variety of reasons -- you may know the subject so well that you take too much for granted, you may not know enough about your subject and leave out vital information, or you may use words in a way that is unfamiliar to your reader. Because of this, it can be quite helpful to have someone else read what you have written and tell you what they see as your main points and arguments. You can then compare what they see to what you have intended, and if necessary, revise your paper to more accurately state your views to your readers. At first, you may be a little leary of trusting what another person has to say about your writing, perhaps thinking that the other person simply does not or can not understand what you have to say. This is very often the case, but you must ask yourself why your reader had trouble understanding--it may be that you have not written what you intended, or have not done so in a clear manner. And a piece of writing does not accomplish much (let alone what the writer may have intended) if no one can understand it. On the other hand, if you feel as though you have stated your ideas clearly, but your reader is just simply missing the point, enlist the help of a second reader. If the second reader has problems as well, however, you should probably take their questions and comments into serious consideration.

The following exercise will help you see whether you are getting your points across to your audience. Using the talk program, you will display your paper to your partner, one paragraph at a time. For each paragraph, your partner

will ask a question which should be possible to answer from reading your paragraph and then give you a summary of the paragraph. Ideally, the summary would answer the question posed by your reader. Next, your partner will ask for clarification on any points that may have been confusing, and then predict what will come next in your paper.

Below is an excerpt from the log of two people working through this exercise with the talk program. Keep in mind the activities that must be carried out for each paragraph: **questioning, summarizing, clarifying** and **predicting**. After the session has ended, the writer uses the printout produced by the talk program to compare what the reader saw to what was intended, and revises accordingly.

Example

ks4w: OK, here's my first paragraph:

> The concept of societal control in a democracy seems self-contradictory at first glance. This is so because individual freedom is cherished, continually sought after and frantically preserved by those fortunate enough to live in a democracy. Because of this, the idea of societal control is frequently quashed(?) before it gets very far. In this paper I will discuss several authors, some who have expounded the virtues of a society which aggressively participates in behavior control, as well as some authors who give strict warnings about the dangers of such actions. I will also relate these views to such things as the rehabilitation of prisoners, laws against smoking and educating school children and attempt to answer the question of whether or not such attempts at control can be acceptable within our society.

pd2q: OK, a question for this paragraph would be.... gee, this is hard, because you really aren't saying much here, except for what you are going to do in the paper--I guess something like "What are some reasons for not accepting the idea of societal control?"

ks4w: OK, I guess I can ask you why you don't think I'm saying much later! Let's hear your summary.

pd2q: This one is tough for the same reason! I guess one of my problems is that I don't really like a paper that starts off listing what is going to be discussed in the rest of the paper. OK, the general gist of this paragraph is that some people are afraid of the notion of societal control, because they think it contradicts the notion of a democracy, while other people advocate societal control.

ks4w: See that wasn't so hard was it? OK, here's your chance. Does anything need any clarification--were you confused by anything?

pd2q: Well, I would like to have a better idea of what is actually meant by societal control and also I wonder what the difference, if any, is between societal and behavior control.

ks4w: OK, those are good questions. What about a prediction?

pd2q: Well, since you come out and tell me what you are planning on talking about in the paper, I predict you will go on to summarize what other authors have to say

ks4w: Good. Here's the next paragraph:

> In Walden Two, B.F. Skinner spells out his idea of Utopia, where everyone is happy, free, creative, etc. At first glance such a world seems like an impossible dream, quite removed from reality as we know it. However, when you take a look at the methods used to create such a society, you become quite aware of why many fear such actions. In Walden Two, Skinner outlines several ways in which children are trained to develop acceptable behavior within their society. One example of such training is illustrated by an exercise which may be named Forbidden Soup. In this exercise, children returning home from a long walk, are tired and hungry and are hoping to be able to sit down and eat. However, this is not what they find. Instead, they are required to stand in front of steaming bowls of soup for five minutes. As this exercise comes after many other exercises that were utilized to achieve certain prerequisite adaptive/acceptance techniques, the children have certain ways of dealing with this particular situation. In this case, the children resort to making jokes about the situation and singing songs to take their minds off of their hungry stomaches. In later versions of this same exercise, however, the children are denied the use of these social devices; they must remain silent throughout

> the waiting period. This forces the children to rely on their own resources. A normal reaction, I think, to this story, is one of shock, as our society generally tries to make things as easy and comfortable as possible for children, so a situation that forces children into dealing with something this uncomfortable and cruel seems highly undesirable.

pd2q: OK, this one seems a little easier. The question would be: How would you describe the methods used by Skinner to achieve his utopia?

ks4w: I like it! How would you summarize the paragraph?

pd2q: B.F. Skinner, while purporting to have created the UTOPIA, used methods that might be seen as cruel and unusual to achieve said utopia.

ks4w: OK, are there any clarifications you would like me to make?

pd2q: Well, I don't really have any about what you have written--that seems pretty clear to me. The questions I do have really concern what Skinner was doing and what the people he was doing it to felt about it.

ks4w: Yes, it's pretty bizarre, isn't it? What about a prediction?

pd2q: I don't know...you sort of just presented your summary of Skinner's practices, but don't really hint as to where you're going next. I guess since you mentioned earlier that you would talk about several authors, I might expect you to go on and do so, presumably discussing an author who disagrees with Skinner's approach.

ks4w: OK, here's my next paragraph:

> There are many reasons why people are hesitant to endorse the use of behavior modification. Some of the fears are the result of lack of information, or perhaps knowledge of extreme examples of behavior modification, but others I think are quite valid. As was pointed out in B.F. Skinner's article on "Designing a Society", many forms of behavior control are practiced by everyone everyday. These are such subtle forms of control, however, that people are unaware that they do actually fall into the category of control, as well as being unaware that they are even doing it. As was stated in this article, giving praise and congratulations to someone who has exhibited acceptable and desired behavior is

> actually a form of behavior control. In the same sense, criticizing someone for what we believe to be unacceptable behavior is also an attempt to control such behavior. It is not, of course, these types of examples of control that people express concern over. In Carl Rogers' article, he brings up some points which need to be thought about when dealing with this subject. These points cover such things as who would actually have the power to put an attempt to control or modify behavior in to action, how to decide what end to work for, and how to achieve this end. He points out that you would want the person in control to have the same end results in mind as the people who are actually to be controlled are expecting. If, on the other hand, the person in power has ulterior motives than the good of the people, then everyone is in serious trouble. So, the potential for misuse of power is a very real fear to be dealt with. As was seen in the example from \italic{Walden Two}, the end worked for seemed quite reasonable and desired, but the methods used to achieve this end were certainly questionable. As Rogers stated careful consideration of the methods to be utilized, as well as careful formulation of the actual ends sought must be addressed before embarking upon any such endeavor. Is it even possible to have acceptable methods which will bring about the desired goals? Perhaps this is the real question at hand.

pd2q: Well first of all, let me say that you write some rather long paragraphs! I say this because when trying to think of a question for this paragraph, I come up with two or three, instead of just one. This leads me to believe that you talk about several main points here, and might want to break this into several paragraphs. Because of this, I'm going to ask 2 questions: Here's the first: Name a few examples of behavior control that we face in our day-to-day lives. The second one would be: What sort of things does Carl Rogers say need to be considered and decided, when dealing with the notion of behavior control?

ks4w: OK, I see your point. I'll have to work on that problem. How about a summary?

pd2q: OK, here goes. Some forms of behavior control are readily accepted in our society, often times not even recognized as such, while other forms are frequently objected to, often based on ignorance or examples of extreme and abusive methods for control. It remains to be seen whether acceptable methods can be found to achieve the desired result.

ks4w: Great--I think you said it better than I did! Questions or clarifications needed?

pd2q: OK--well you state (two times, by the way!) that Carl Rogers says certain things need to be considered when thinking about behavior control. Does he ever say how to reach decisions on these things? For instance, how does he propose to determine whether or not the "person chosen to be in power" really does have the interests of the masses in mind?

ks4w: Well, see he never does go on to make those kinds of suggestions. He mainly wants to alert people to the potential problems and then goes on to spell out what kinds of problems you want to be aware of from the start. He probably doesn't want to provide a set of procedures to deal with these things, because the decisions will more than likely depend very much on who is involved in the decision making process. In other words, these things need to be decided on an individual basis, since no two situations will ever be the same.

pd2q: OK, that's good. You might want to think about adding that to your paper, saying something like "Rogers gives suggestions for what to be concerned about, but does not provide solutions for these problems, since they need to be decided on an individual basis"--or something.

ks4w: Thanks for the suggestion. What are your predictions?

pd2q: Well, I think you will go on to try and answer the question you pose at the end of this paragraph, i.e., Is it even possible to have acceptable methods which will bring about the desired goals?

ks4w: OK, moving right along:

> In the article Changing Behavior in the Classroom, the idea of a system of rewards to change behavior is expounded. This theory is based on the belief that all behavior is learned and can be changed by giving people a reason to change. It is important to keep in mind that it is the behavior and not the personality of the person exhibiting the behavior that must be addressed. In this

system, it is believed that any behavior which is being exhibited is somewhere and somehow being reinforced by some type of reward. If the behavior in question is deemed unacceptable, then in order to get rid of it, you must find and dispose of the payoff, in other words, behavior that goes unrewarded will be extinguished. On the same premise, if you want to change behavior, you must pinpoint the behavior you want to bring about, and establish a reward for that behavior. It is important in these cases, that the person knows exactly what must be done in order to receive the reward. In the case of school children the rewards need to be quite tangible at first, and could be in many forms, such as being able to have some free time in which the child can do what he or she wishes, giving the child special privileges such as using a tape recorder that has always interested him. In these cases, it should be possible to note when progress is being made, i.e., the child is more apt to display the desired behavior more often, etc. When such progress is noticed, the use of approving behavior by the person in power can be coupled with the tangible rewards, with the same result. When this stage is reached, the need for the reward (tangible) should become less and less, as well as the time between the behavior and receipt of the reward. Finally, the behavior should come about quite naturally, with the reward coming from the child himself in the form of pride in achievement and accomplishment. This system seems to me to be quite acceptable as well as desirable. School children need to be taught many things in order to grow up to be responsible adults with the ability to make positive contributions to society. If they learn within a framework such as the one just described, they will come into adulthood with the attitude of doing right for all concern, themselves as well as others. While the children in Walden Two are said to be such individuals, I am very much against the means used to achieve this result and feel that a reward system is able to achieve these results without putting the children through such hardships. While I do not advocate the coddling of youngsters during their childhood, as I believe this puts them at a disadvantage as far as dealing with the realities of adulthood, I also do not advocate throwing them into such preconceived hardships as was done in Walden Two.

pd2q: Oh God--another killer paragraph! You really need to work on this I think! Once again, several questions come to mind, so I will ask them. They might help you see where you might want to end one paragraph and start another. First question: What is the theory behind a reward system for bringing about acceptable behavior? Second question: Why would a reward system be preferable to that used by Skinner in Walden Two?

ks4w: OK, OK, again I see your point. I guess I have trouble with my logical connections, so I tend to jam everything into one paragraph. OK, let's have the summary.

pd2q: OK: A system that removes existing rewards for unacceptable behavior and provides rewards for good or acceptable behavior, can produce the same types of individuals that Walden Two boasted of producing, and seems to be a much preferred method to that used by Skinner.

ks4w: Geez, why did it take me so long to say basically the same thing?!? OK, what confused you?

pd2q: Well, one thing you might explain a little more is what you mean by "approving behavior". The whole thing sort of rambles on too, I think because of the way you are describing the reward system. You should say something like: The system of rewards expounded in.... is based on the following principles: behavior is learned, and so can be retaught, person must know what is expected of him, for small children, reward must be tangible at first, blah, blah, blah. Then give a short example (rather than going on and on about a schoolchild getting to use a tape recorder). Sorry if this isn't very clear, but I think you could get your points across a little more succinctly if you try.

ks4w: Yes, well I'll admit I tend to get rather long-winded! OK, what's your prediction?

pd2q: I predict you will go on to propose your own theory for behavior control/modification, which will very closely resemble the reward theory.

Using the log to guide revisions

As you can see from this excerpt, the ease with which your reader is able to complete the four activities for each paragraph can be a good indicator of the coherence of your paper. For example, it will be difficult to think of a question if you merely state several main points, without ever spelling out a connection between them. Summarizing should be fairly simple, but if the reader feels as though there are several summaries instead of a nice compact one, it may be the case that you have not connected your ideas for the reader, or that you have tried discussing too many issues at one time. The clarifying activity can point out areas where more background information may be needed to inform the reader, or where further elaboration might help drive the point home. Having a reader predict where you are going can help you gain insight on how others may interpret or attack the problem as well as whether or not your text is logically connected.

The following illustrates how the writer uses a printout of the session produced by the talk program to guide the revisions of the paper. (For brevity sake, only one paragraph will be discussed.)

The original paragraph begins:

> In the article Changing Behavior in the Classroom, the idea of a system of rewards to change behavior is expounded. This theory is based on the belief that all behavior is learned and can be changed by giving people a reason to change. .....

Responding to the reader's comments that the paragraph is trying to discuss too many issues, our writer decides to break it down a little. The reader also felt that the description of the reward theory was somewhat rambling and hence confusing, so our writer begins by trying to make the description clearer. Following the suggestion from the reader, our writer revises this description to read:

> The article "Changing Behavior in the Classroom," describes using a reward system to change behavior. This theory, perhaps better known as positive re-enforcement, is based on the following beliefs and principles: behavior is learned, and so can be

> retaught, the person being retaught must know what type of behavior is expected and must be rewarded for correct behavior, incorrect behavior persists because it is somehow being rewarded--once the reward is removed, the behavior will cease. This article focused on changing behavior of school children in the classroom, and used as an example the case of a young boy who constantly disrupted the class. In an effort to change the behavior, he is told by the teacher that if he sits quietly and listens, he will be able to have extra time to play with his favorite taperecorder. Noting that for young children the reward must, at first, be quite tangible , the author goes on to explain that as the child progresses toward more acceptable behavior, approval for the appropriate behavior is often quite enough reward for continued good behavior. Finally, the behavior should come about quite naturally, with the reward coming from the child himself in the form of pride in achievement and accomplishment. This system seems to me to be quite acceptable as well as desirable. School children need to be taught many things in order to grow up to be responsible adults with the ability to make positive contributions to society. If they learn within a framework such as the one just described, they will come into adulthood with the attitude of doing right for all concerned, themselves as well as others. But can such a system, which seems so simple and yet so right (especially when compared to the system used by Skinner in Walden Two) be put to work on a larger scale, say an entire society?

Having rewritten the discussion of the reward system, our writer decides the next logical step would be to begin answering the question just posed, whether a system of the type advocated by Rogers could actually work.. Taking into account the reader's comments about the examples of negative or excessive methods being sprinkled throughout the paper, our writer decides to focus the next paragraph solely on the reward system on a larger scale, and save the negative examples for later. The next paragraph begins:

> Not only would such a system work for society at large, it already is in many areas of our lives. For example, recent trends in our prison and judicial systems show an increasing attempt to move from strict negative re-enforcement (i.e., long, hard prison terms) to a system that rewards prisoners for good behavior by shortening their original term. On a somewhat smaller scale, some personal insurance companies are giving people who do not smoke smaller insurance rates, as a reward for not smoking. In fact, the notion of rewarding acceptable behavior can be seen at work in such simple things as rewarding a dog for doing his

> business outside, as well as more complicated affairs such as awarding medals to soldiers for heroic behavior (with the underlying assumption that this will promote others to behave similarly). Again, the advantages to this system seem rather obvious, especially if you stop to consider the other available methods and their results.

Our writer plans to discuss the examples of negative and excessive methods next, making an attempt to show that not only are they offensive, they often do not achieve the desired result.

Steps for Completing the Exercise with a Partner

The preceding example has illustrated how a reader can provide helpful insights for a writer through the use of questioning, summarizing, clarifying and predicting. Using a printout of the session, the writer then uses the results to revise the paper. You should now be prepared to complete this exercise with a partner. Below are the steps necessary to do this.

Writer: Bring up the talk program with you and your partner.

Writer: Copy the first paragraph of your paper into your talkwindow.

Reader: After reading the paragraph, type your question, summary, request for clarification and prediction into the form in your window.

Writer: After discussing any questions or points of confusion raised by your reader, copy your next paragraph into the window.

Reader: Again, type your question, summary, request for clarification and prediction into the form in your window.

Continue these steps for each paragraph in your paper. When you have gone through the entire paper, quit the program. Print out the log of the session when you have finished and use it when revising your paper.